AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) In a distributed computing environment, a method for distributing peripheral device operational metrics information, the method comprising:

receiving, by an imaging device, a command to perform an imaging operation;

responsive to receiving the command, performing, by the imaging device, the imaging operation; and

responsive to performing the imaging operation, communicating, by the imaging device, metrics information corresponding to the imaging operation directly to a second device without communicating the metrics information through any intermediate device;

receiving, at the second device, a request from a third device to access the metrics information; and

responsive to receiving the request, providing access to the metrics information to the third device without the third device communicating with the imaging device.

2. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the metrics information comprises page count and print media type information.

3. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the metrics information is not directly solicited from the imaging device by the second or third device.

4. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the metrics information comprises toner utilization information.

5. (Currently amended) In a distributed computing environment, a computer-readable medium comprising computer-executable instructions for distributing peripheral device metrics information, the computer-executable instructions comprising instructions for:

receiving, by an imaging device, a command to perform an imaging operation;

performing, by the imaging device, the imaging operation; and

responsive to performing the imaging operation, communicating, by the imaging device, metrics information corresponding to the imaging operation directly to a second device without communicating through any intermediate device, the metrics information for access by an application on a third device, such that the application on the third device can access the metrics information without forwarding any request for the metrics information to the imaging device.

6. (Original) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 5, wherein the metrics information comprises page count and print media type information.

7. (Previously presented) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 5, wherein the metrics information is not directly solicited from the imaging device by the second or third device.

8. (Original) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 5, wherein the metrics information comprises toner utilization information.

9. (Currently amended) An imaging device comprising:

a memory comprising computer-executable instructions for distributing metrics information corresponding to imaging operations;

a processor that is operatively coupled to the memory, the processor being configured to fetch and execute the computer-executable instructions from the memory, the computer-executable instructions comprising instructions for:

receiving, by the imaging device, a command to perform an imaging operation;

performing, by the imaging device, the imaging operation; and

responsive to performing the imaging operation, communicating, by the imaging device, metrics information corresponding to the imaging operation <u>directly</u> to a second device <u>without communicating through any intermediate device, the metrics information</u> for access by an application on a third device, such that the application on the third device can access the metrics information without forwarding any request for the metrics information to the imaging device.

10. (Original) An imaging device as recited in claim 9, wherein the metrics information comprises page count and print media type information.

11. (Previously presented) An imaging device as recited in claim 9, wherein the metrics information is not directly solicited from the imaging device by the second or third device.

12. (Previously presented) An imaging device as recited in claim 9, wherein the metrics information comprises toner utilization information.

13-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) In a distributed computing environment, a computer-readable medium comprising computer-executable instructions for providing real-time imaging metrics information, the computer-executable instructions comprising instructions for:

receiving, at a server device, imaging operational metrics corresponding to an imaging operation <u>directly from an imaging device</u>, the imaging operation having been performed by ~~an~~ <u>the</u> imaging device;

receiving, at the server device, a request from an application program for at least a portion of the imaging operational metrics, the application program executing on another device different from the imaging device and the server device; and

communicating the at least a portion of the imaging operational metrics from the server device to the application program.

20. (Original) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 19, wherein the metrics information comprises page count and/or print media type information.

21. (Original) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 19, wherein the metrics information comprises toner utilization information.

22. (Currently amended) A server comprising:

a memory comprising computer-executable instructions for providing real-time imaging metrics information;

a processor that is operatively coupled to the memory, the processor being configured to fetch and execute the computer-executable instructions from the memory, the computer-executable instructions comprising instructions for:

receiving, at the server, an unsolicited set of imaging operational metrics corresponding to an imaging operation directly from an imaging device, the imaging operation having been performed by an the imaging device;

receiving, at the server, a request from an application program for at least a portion of the imaging operational metrics, the application program executing on another device different from the imaging device and the server; and

communicating the at least a portion of the imaging operational metrics to the application program.

23. (Previously presented) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the request from the third device to access the metrics information is a registration request to automatically receive the metrics information whenever the metrics information is updated, and wherein the providing access to the metrics information to the third device includes the second device communicating the metrics information to the third device when the imaging device communicates updated metrics information to the second device.

24-27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously presented) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 5, wherein the application is at least one of a billing utility or an order processing utility.

29. (Previously presented) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 19, wherein the communicating is performed automatically without the application program polling or querying the server device.

30. (Currently amended) A server as recited in claim 22, wherein the request from the application program is a registration request for the server to provide the at least a portion of the imaging operational metrics to the application program when the at least a portion of the imaging operational metrics are updated responsive to the imaging device performing imaging operations, and wherein the communicating is performed automatically without the application program polling or querying the server device.

31. (Currently amended) In a distributed computing environment, a method for providing real-time imaging metrics information, the method comprising:

receiving, at a server device, imaging metrics corresponding to an imaging operation directly from an imaging device, the imaging operation having been performed by ~~an~~ the imaging device;

receiving, at the server device, a registration request from ~~the billing utility~~ an application program for the server to provide the imaging metrics to the application program when the imaging metrics are updated responsive to the imaging device performing the imaging operation;

responsive to the registration request, configuring the server device to automatically communicate the at least a portion of the imaging metrics to the ~~billing utility~~ application program; and

responsive to receiving the imaging metrics, automatically communicating at least a portion of the imaging metrics to the ~~billing utility~~ application program.

32. (New) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the application on the third device can access the metrics information multiple times, and wherein the metrics information includes data indicative of only the imaging operations performed by the imaging device since the last access by the application on the third device.

33. (New) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein a plurality of applications on the third device can each access the metrics information multiple times, and wherein the metrics information provided to each individual one of the applications includes data indicative of only the imaging operations performed by the imaging device since the last access by the corresponding individual one of the applications on the third device.

34. (New) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein a plurality of applications each on a corresponding one of a plurality of third devices can each access the metrics information multiple times, and wherein the metrics information provided to each individual one of the applications includes data indicative of only the imaging operations performed by the imaging device since

the last access by the corresponding individual one of the applications on the corresponding one of the plurality of third devices.

35. (New) A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the metrics information includes a page/length count for the imaging device since the last access by the application on the third device.

36. (New) A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the metrics information includes a plurality of page/length counts, each for a corresponding individual one of a plurality of individual media supplies in the imaging device, since the last access by the application on the third device.

37. (New) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the communicating the metrics information is performed substantially immediately after performing the imaging operation.

38. (New) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the imaging operation comprises a plurality of imaging operations, and wherein the communicating the metrics information is performed substantially immediately after performing each of the imaging operations.